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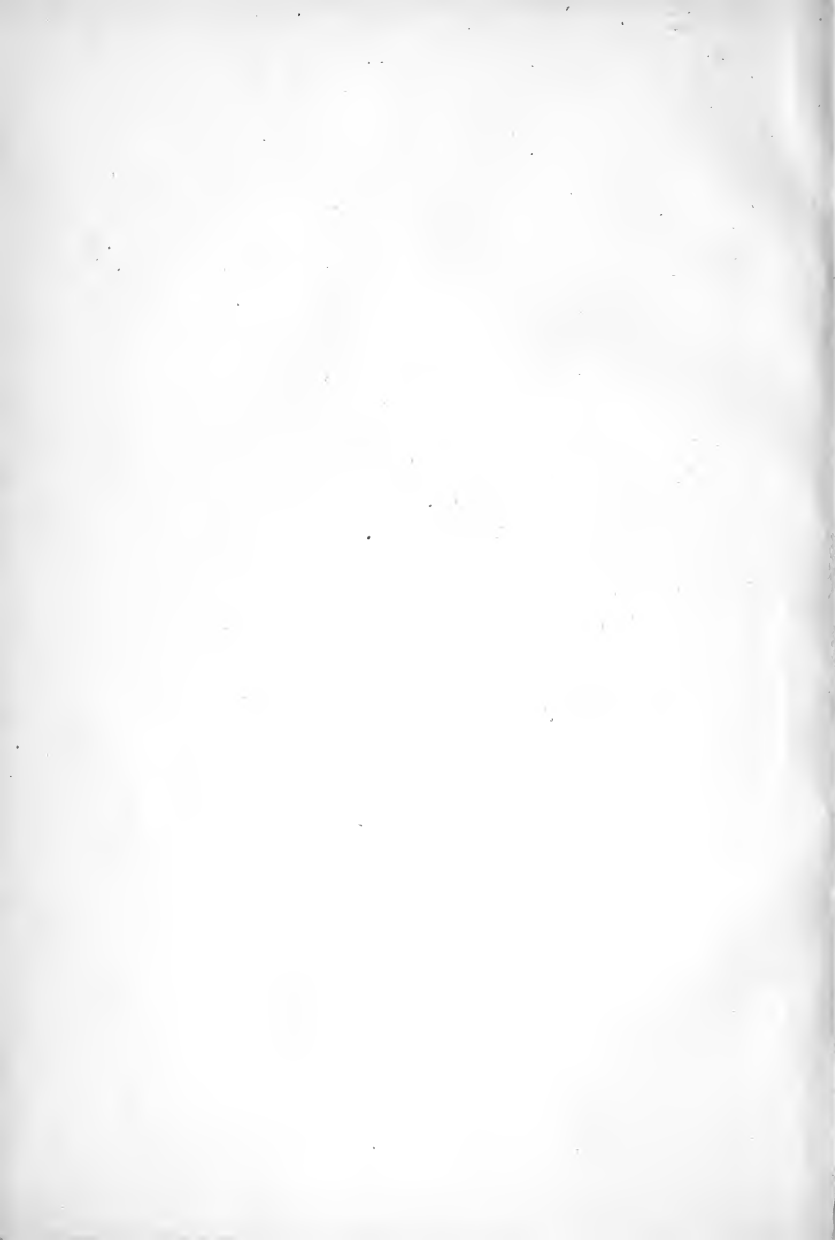
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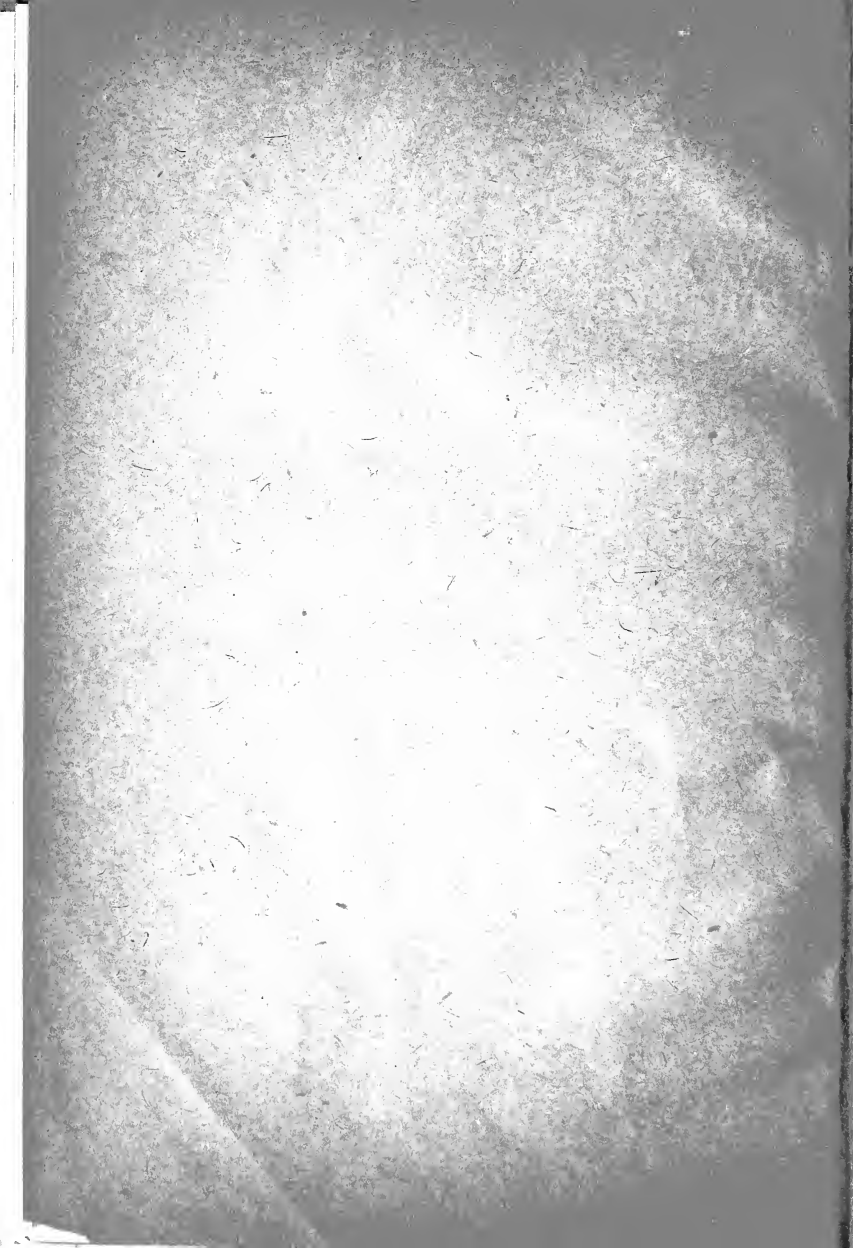
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A. DE VITI DE MARCO
ITALY AND THE EUROPEAN
WAR. TWO POLITICAL AD-
DRESSES.



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THE ITALIAN RADICALS AND THE
WAR.

Address before the Roman Radical As-
sociaton.

(February 22nd 1915)

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By Transfer
MAY 4 1919

The Italian Radicals and the War ⁽¹⁾

TRIESTE AND GERMANY.

The Radical Party in common with other parties, takes as starting point for its action the strictly national problem of the « terre irredente », (2) but must go further and consider it in relation to the European situation and the German Imperialist programme, which is the true cause of the present conflict.

Trieste, — which is the symbolic word we use to designate the complex question of our national claims on the eastern boundary and on the Adriatic, — has become an episode, a chapter, a number of the Imperialist programme of Germany. It is an *Austrian* port, in so far, and for so long as Austria continues to be an

(1) Text of the declarations made on behalf of the Council of the Roman Radical Association, by the President, Hon. de Viti de Marco, at the meeting of the Association held on February 20th 1915, and unanimously ratified by the Assembly.

(2) « terre irredente », or portions of the national domain still unredeemed from foreign yoke.

integral part of the « Political System of German States » ; but according to the Pangerman programme Trieste is a *German* port, destined to become the great outlet upon the Adriatic which shall secure to « Greater Germany » the direct sea-route to the Mediterranean, evading the English military control of the Channel, and of Gibraltar.

Thus, in the question of Trieste, Germany is party in her own cause, more than ally of Austria. She contests the Italian possession of Trieste the more energetically the nearer appears the dismemberment of Austria and the realisation of Italian aspirations.

Of this we have recent indications. In all the rumours that have arisen or been set afloat of concessions to Italy, there is talk of Trent, of the Dalmatian islands, of harbours on the Quarnero, of Fiume also..., always omitting the name of Trieste.

We will hope that to this exclusion is due the failure of the mission ascribed by popular report to Prince von Bülow.

At the final reckoning we do not think there will be found an Italian statesman disposed to sell Trieste to Germany, in order to acquire Trent from Austria, either

directly, or through political transfer.

It is true that a former Cabinet Minister, — who considers himself as taking a temporary holiday, — has shewn himself behind the scenes, ready to appear before the curtain to propose this bargain: *Italy to remain in the Triple Alliance, pledged to neutrality, in order to facilitate the success of the Austro-German arms, receiving in compensation a slice of the Trentino and perhaps some OTHER TRIFLE, — that « GOOD DEAL », in short, which would be at once the blackmail imposed by our conservatives on our Allies, and the sugarplum which the Italian Government would be obliged to fling to Democracy.*

Such traffic in reciprocal deception, could scarcely survive the present conflict; either the Austro-German combination will win and the Trentino will be of no use to us, especially from the military point of view, for Italy will become more and more dependant upon Germany and Austria: — or the Entente will win, and we must square accounts with them.

Moreover, while the initial policy of neutrality pure and simple justly claimed the respect of our old allies and won us the goodwill of the countries of the En-

tente, the present attempt to negotiate with the Central Empires, discounts completely its value in the eyes both of our former allies, and of the Entente.

The policy of neutrality pure and simple is an unimpeachable position for Italy, diplomatically. The policy of *bargained neutrality* exposes us to the greatest dangers from the antagonism and retaliations of both sides.

We must repudiate the offer, renouncing the bait of the Trentino. The problem of our national claims would be made more difficult, not solved, by rending a Bishopric from Austria, still an ally, in order to add a Prefecture to the Kingdom of Italy.

Italian democracy wants war only because it wants to solve a great problem : that of national unity and of the political independance of Italy in Europe.

This problem remains completely outside the scope of our treaty of alliance, which did not contemplate, but excluded the case of a war undertaken by one of the allied States in order to establish its own political hegemony over all Europe including its own Allies! It is a problem created by this European war in whose origin we

have no part, now forced upon every State in Europe whose nationality is still incomplete, and whose political independence is menaced. Italy is one of these States.

Thus it is that our eventual military action for reclaiming the «terre irredente», and above all Trieste, while appearing to take the form of an offensive war against Austria, is really a war of defence against the sudden, but premeditated attack of Germany, and places us in the same defensive position as France, Belgium, England, and Russia, who are fighting, at least for the present, against the danger of German Imperialism in Europe.

THE QUESTION OF THE ADRIATIC.

A few lines will suffice to state clearly the integral question of our national claims.

Neither Austria-Hungary, nor Germany, have outlets of their own on the those shores of the Adriatic whose population is Italian; nor have they known how to propitiate the Italian element, whose commercial interest would nevertheless have facilitated the progress of

friendly political union with Austria, had the local traditions of Italian nationality and culture been respected.

The imminent danger of the dismemberment of Austria, and the consequent prevision that the Italian element will be subjected to still ruder pressure from the Germans on one side and from the Slaves on the other, gives to the question a degree of urgency which it lacked before the war; it must and will be decided now, and Italy cannot remain a stranger to its settlement.

From our point of view the settlement consists in the exclusion of every form of political dominion, — Austrian, German, or eventually Slave, — from the territory on the Adriatic coast whose population is Italian.

Such a solution raises a grave question: that of the sea.

Deprived of the sea, Austria and Hungary will ever tend toward its reconquest.

The trend of peoples towards the sea is traced in history by bloodshed and wars. It is not our intention to sow the seed of future conflicts while with the claim to reintegrate our national territory,

we seek today to eliminate a present cause of friction and conflict.

But liberal democracy maintains that *the sea should be freely open to traffic, and free navigation guaranteed to all mercantile ships.*

We must therefore be prepared to make the largest concessions, and to give the most precise guarantees of a commercial nature, so that free traffic by sea may be open at all times to the Italian ports on the Adriatic, and through these respectively to the Austrian, German, Slave or Hungarian *back-lands.*

Ready to concede the utmost on the commercial ground, we are to the same extent uncompromising on the political ground.

The only *reciprocal* agreements and concessions of a political nature are those which can and should reasonably intervene between Italy and Serbia, south of Fiume.

Here is the problem to be solved, without imperialistic exaggerations, but in its integrity, to eliminate a cause of lasting conflict.

And it must be solved by Italy in conformity with her interests. As I have said, we cannot solve it by negotiating our-

neutrality with the Central Empires. Nor should we remain inactive until the end of the war, relying upon the goodwill of the States of the Entente, simply because they have declared that in the event of their victory, the new map of Europe will be determined by the *principle* of nationality. Just because nationality is a *principle*, but not always a *fact* clearly defined by geographic conditions, its practical application will be subject to modification and reciprocal concessions.

We find ourselves in exactly this position having on our borders a mixed population, and in Dalmatia Italian nuclei of a superior civilisation who are submerged by surrounding Slave populations of a lower grade of developement.

Moreover, we know that England and France have no great interest in dismembering or excessively weakening Austria; that Russia aims above all at her own aggrandisement and that of Serbia, and perhaps of Roumenia, and has therefore her reasons for discouraging the competition of Italy in the allotment of the available territory.

Whence the necessity for our armed intervention, in order to arrive at the new

Peace Congress with the *accomplished fact*.

And it is not enough to prepare by force of arms the *accomplished fact*, which must then receive the sanction of the Peace Congress, and be guaranteed against the danger of a counter action on the part of Austria and Germany. This is not possible without preliminary agreements with the nations of the Entente, and with Serbia. It will be easier to conclude such agreements on terms favourable to us now, during the war and while the present equilibrium of the belligerent forces remains unchanged. On no account should we come forth from the war isolated.

Certainly one condition, the principle one for assuring the future tranquillity of Europe and the new geographical settlement and peaceful possession of the new acquisitions, lies in weakening the menacing superior military organisation of Germany. It is our interest, like that of the belligerent States, and especially of the small neutral States, to wear out Prussian militarism.

But it is not our interest to crush Germany, as we begin to hear said by a few, already intoxicated in anticipation with a

victory which may safely be predicted, but which does not yet seem very near.

We have no desire to assist, in opposition to our Allies of yesterday, in the resuscitation of old dreams of hegemony, nor in the creation of new dreams.

A disquieting symptom was apparent in the hostile reception given by the French press to the resolutions passed by the Socialist Conference in London, in which the international socialists endorsed the *war of liberation*, not that of *conquest*; a resolution entirely in harmony with our interests and with the thought of Italian radicalism.

Another grave symptom, confirmed by the declarations of M. Sazonoff, is the eventual agreement for consenting to the Russian occupation of the Dardanelles. This touches a vital Italian interest, that of our commerce in the Black Sea, and especially with Roumania, which supplies us with wheat.

If we are opposed to the German aim to occupy the Dardanelles under a Turkish title, we are equally opposed to the similar intention on the part of Russia. We demand the freedom of the seas.

Whence may be seen how difficult is

the task of diplomatic preparation, surpassing that of the military occupation of the territory to be redeemed.

We are not informed whether the Government is working in this direction, or what ground has been covered, or whether it is likely to succeed in bringing the enterprise to a successful issue. We do not know the facts sufficiently to form a judgment, still less to give advice. We must wait to judge the work of the Government in the light of the accomplished fact.

To us as an organised party, falls a different task: — that of the moral preparation of the country. The great majority of our people is ignorant of the problem, which must be illustrated in all its parts; in the causes which have determined the conflict; in its political objects; in its financial and economic repercussion upon all classes of citizens.

So only, by military preparation, by diplomatic preparation, and by moral preparation, will it be possible for us to face the great struggle.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION AND THE RADICALS.

So far I have perhaps forgotten the part devolving upon Parliament. The omission indeed is not altogether unmerited, for the deputies have been silent; shew themselves desirous of remaining silent; ask no light from the Government, and give no light to the country.

The apathy of the Chamber of Deputies has been said to shew that Neutralist currents have prevailed there. This may be doubted since it cannot be said that recent manifestations throughout the country, — if we except the letter of the Hon. Giolitti, — point to such a change.

It is perhaps more prudent to think that the European war was of lively interest to our political representatives during the fleeting moment when it seemed likely to furnish a *casus belli* against the Ministry! But when the Giolittian majority, had to abandon its intention of provoking a great Parliamentary crisis, it ceased to take an interest in the little European crisis.

Despite the quiet waters of Montecitorio we know that there is a Ministry in perpetual ambush facing the Ministry tempo-

rarily in power. The thought of each is known to us officially, from a comparison of the Parliamentary declarations of our Premier, now somewhat out of date, with the more recent extra-parliamentary letter of Giolitti. *It is a question of choosing between two lines of conduct which, both starting from an armed and vigilant neutrality, at a given moment diverge, turning, the one, (that of Hon. Giolitti) towards absolute neutrality WITH DUE RESERVATIONS; and the other, (that of Hon. Salandra) towards armed intervention WITH DUE RESERVATIONS!*

It has seemed at times that the divergence was to become more accentuated; but it is always possible in politics that the diverging lines may meet. The danger remains that the two reservations, may at a certain moment combine, and with one accord completely elude our aspirations!

While our preference cannot be doubtful, we cannot, even in the special question of foreign policy, express our confidence in the Government, from which we are divided, moreover, on several very important questions of political and economic policy, which have for the moment become secondary.

In conclusion, the position which the

radical party must take regarding parliamentary policy and the Government is this we must prevent a crisis — untimely for us, and timely for others! — from intervening to free the Salandra Ministry from the responsibilities which through the Parliamentary declarations of its Premier it has assumed toward the country.

In the existing Parliamentary situation, we must prevent an assault upon the more or less armoured « postal diligence (1) »; and above all we must prevent members of the Radical Party from joining the assailants.

Still less could we tolerate anything so equivocal as a new Ministry in Radical guise, accredited by the presence of a Radical member set as transition head of the Giolittian crowd, pending the return of the authentic Boss.

Not only would this substitution fail to reassure us in view of the pressing political question of the moment, but it would introduce again into the whole conduct of Italian politics, that degenerate *confusio-*
nism which was condemned by the last Congress of the Radical Party.

(1) *Postal diligence*; term once humourously applied to the Sonnino Ministry when after an hundred days in office it was assailed by the Giolittian opposition.

The prestige of the Radicals in the country, is still suffering from the preceding Radico-Giolittian coalition; the Party needs to be reconstituted and invigorated by a reasonable period of ministerial abstinence, and of political activity.

Those of our friends who took part in the Giolitti Ministry, although they did not in reality share in the direction of its general policy, are still legally co-responsible and involve the party responsibility, for the waste and disorder in the accounts following the expenses of the Libian War; they are responsible for the Decree of Sovereignty which is the true and exclusive cause of the prolongation of the war against Turkey and its enormous expense; they are responsible, and involve the party responsibility, for deficient military preparation and the disorganised condition of the railways, which placed Italy in so painful a situation in the tragic hour which determined the great conflict.

We all remember that at the announcement of the *Ultimatum* of Austria to Serbia, many of us said that Italy should at once have denounced the Triple Alliance; but we were made to understand that, being completely disarmed, we could not

threaten those who were perfectly armed.

It is well now that the rest should be known. *Upon our refusal to send the corporal with the famous flag to the French frontier, the Governments of Austria and Germany considered the expediency of denouncing the treaty themselves, to acquire liberty of action against Italy.*

Those who are responsible for this critical situation have since boasted that they knew the intentions of Austria a year before we became aware of them.

And now we understand how, prompted by an instinct of self-preservation they first sought, in the sitting of November 21st, to get control of the Government in order to prevent the Ministry, pressed by public opinion clamouring for intervention, from arraigning them for the military preparation. We understand how, the first attempt having been foiled, they next unfurled the imposing banner of neutrality, of fidelity to treaties, of the economic interests of the working classes, in order to avoid, or defer the hour of the supreme test.

And we for the same reasons, demand that those responsible should remain at the disposal of the Nation and out of Office.

THE RADICAL PLATFORM AS
PRESENTED AT A BY-ELECTION.
GALLIPOLI.

(March 21st 1915)



The Radical Platform as presented at a By-Election. ⁽¹⁾

THE EUROPEAN CRISIS AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

To present today an electoral platform is an arduous undertaking in view of the economic depression which weighs heavily upon the working-classes and of the great European Crisis which eclipses every problem of internal policy, however important.

An electoral platform seems to me too great a thing when confronting the specific problem of this time of distress, too small when confronting the general problem of the European War.

The crisis of the war arrested the work

(1) This address was delivered at a mass meeting at Gallipoli, on March 14th 1915. The election took place on the following Sunday March 21st, and the orator was returned to Parliament by a large majority.

begun patiently during the past years for regulating local finances, constructing school buildings, railways, tramways and harbours, and improving the civil service. The problem of local finances which in the past we have often pointed out as the chief and most urgent of Italian financial questions, must also await the end of the war. But it must then be comprised in the new general reform of taxation which will be imposed in consequence of the war on all States, even the non-belligerent States.

By a fatal sequence of cause and effect the European War affects not only the belligerent countries, but also neutral countries through the network of international exchange by which all commercial nations are today linked together, and Italy is especially hard hit because of the great masses of emigrants who are obliged suddenly to return from abroad, thus increasing disoccupation and distress at home.

Nor does the situation bear equally even upon the different regions in Italy; it is less felt in the north, where the production of wheat is larger and where side by side with the industries paralysed by the war, other industries profit by it and prosper. While in Southern Italy, and especially in this

region, where the cultivation of wheat is reduced to a minimum, where the extension of vineyards is greatest and where there are none of the industries that produce Army and Navy supplies, the harmful results are manifested in the total difference between the higher price of the wheat we have to buy, and the lower price of the wine we need to sell, and cannot sell.

The rise in wheat and the fall in the price of wine are co-related phenomena, since the consumption of wine by the working-classes at the north is notably diminished owing to the high price of bread and of the most necessary articles of food.

In the measures taken to meet the crisis the Government, while seeking to eliminate famine prices, instead of abolishing wholly and at once the duty on cereals, pandered to the popular prejudice against monopoly and speculation, and aggravated the condition of the market.

Moreover, instead of preventing any exportation of wheat to the Central Empires, these were permitted to import large quantities to the detriment of the Italian consumer.

The mistake of the Government is due to the policy of agrarian protection and

subservience to the Triple Alliance, to which the present Ministry like its predecessors has held itself bound, and against which my friends and I have always fought.

Had the outbreak of hostilities found Italy under the system of Free Trade, or even had the entire duty on cereals been abolished from August until the new harvest, the crisis would certainly not have become so acute, for we should then have been able to get in our supply at 30, instead of at 40 francs,

The protectionist error costs the buyers of wheat at least 200 millions of francs this year by reason of the raised price. Limiting our example to the political constituency of Gallipoli alone, whose population is about 83,000 inhabitants and where practically no wheat is produced, the increase in price represents an extra burden of 650,000 francs for a term of six months.

This is not all; the other specific cause of the wheat famine is the closing of the Dardanelles, (the route by which we receive our supply of wheat), imposed on Turkey, — our enemy of yesterday, — by Germany, our Ally of yesterday, and, they say, also of today.

Our government made no protest against

the closing of the Dardanelles; did not insist upon the free passage of neutral Italian and Rumanian ships, and yet during the Libian War we were forbidden to attack the Dardanelles, and Turkey was required to leave them open to European commerce.

At this moment in which the Anglo-French fleet is forcing the Dardanelles, in which one of the greatest historical events of the century, and perhaps of many centuries to come, — the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, — is about to take place; — in which the occupation of Constantinople will decide the future of the Straits and the question of free commerce in grain, our fleet is not cooperating; we have no part in the portentous event with which are bound up the memories of the past and the aspirations of the future.

ITALIAN NEUTRALITY AND GERMANY.

And now let me state a few facts, and ask a question :

This war has driven back to our country tens of thousands of emigrants with their families;

This war has closed to us our usual export markets;

This war has, by the closing of the Dardanelles, cut off the avenue of our wheat supply;

This war has raised the price of all food stuffs and lowered the price of articles of luxury including wine.

Is it our interest, is it the direct interest of the labouring classes of Southern Italy that this state of war should end as soon as possible? Is it our duty so to direct our foreign policy as to hasten the end of this European War?

Or do you prefer that the labouring classes to whom the outlet of emigration is denied, should be condemned to a slow death by starvation?

This is the problem which the European War places before the Italian proletariat, and especially the agricultural proletariat of Southern Italy.

Now the present state of armed and vigilant neutrality is to the military advantage of Germany, and is to the economic advantage of a few centres or groups of merchants, manufacturers and workmen who do not represent Italian commerce,

Italian industries, nor the working-class of Italy.

The state of armed neutrality is profitable to works for arms and ammunition, since Italy is arming as though she were at war; it is profitable to all the contraband traders who starve the Italian people in order to feed the soldiers of Austria and Germany; it is profitable to a small category of workmen employed in the manufacture of articles required for the army and navy, or in the Italo-Austrian contraband traffic.

Neither as masters nor as workmen do you belong to any of the groups thus shamefully enriching themselves. You simply pay the extra profits of the one and of the other. The longer the European war, lasts, and the armed neutrality of Italy, the longer will be your sufferings. Should the war continue for three years, as many foresee, and should Italy remain neutral and armed, I can see at the end only bankruptcy for Apulia. Yet this may be called the war of Apulia: It is the war on the issues of which will depend some important features of the economic future of Apulia.

The present war will decide whether the possibility of independent national life

is to be vouchsafed to the Balkan States, or whether they shall be subject to the political and commercial influence of Austria, and therefore of Germany.

Austria aims at making the Balkan Peninsula subservient to her system of customs, railways and harbours, excluding Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania from the Adriatic, imposing a system of railways from north to south from Vienna to Salonico, and obstructing railway communication from east to west, from the Danube and the Black Sea to the Adriatic.

This threefold system of customs, railways, and harbours, tends to secure to Austria economic monopoly in the Balkans to the exclusion of Italy, and above all of Apulia. Yet by reason of her geographical position, vicinity, and historical precedents Apulia is peculiarly destined to derive benefit from those relations of culture and of commercial interests which in a regime of liberty would certainly be established between the Balkan States and Italy.

It is of evident interest especially for Apulia, that the Austro-German block should be defeated, that the Balkan nationalities should definitely arrest the eastward trend of Austrian policy; that we and the Balkan

States should cement bonds of amity, opening the way for the economic penetration of Italy in the near East.

But we have other and greater problems involved in the European conflict.

There is the problem of the completion of our national unity. This has been considered by some a mere sentimental aspiration. It is far from that. Trent and Trieste are required for the defence of the Italian frontier against Austria. The political and military safety of Italy depend upon the conquest of boundaries along the chain of the Alps, comprising Trent, Trieste, Pola and Istria.

For thirty years, during the Alliance, we have been at the mercy of Austria. For special military reasons it serves the interest of the Central Empires to keep us at their mercy. Without Trent and the contested coast of the Adriatic our national defence requires the maintenance of three army corps and a big fleet in the Adriatic. The establishment of our natural confines would remove a latent cause of conflict with our near Eastern neighbours, and would permit a considerable reduction in military expenses.

The problem of the vindication of our

claims, then, not only revives the sentiments and ideals of the Italian Risorgimento, but comprises also material interests immediate and permanent.

But to ensure these advantages it is necessary that the problem be solved in its integrity. A strip of the Trentino, in other words, would not suffice, because there would still remain the thorn of « *Irredentismo* » (1) and the competition of armaments between Italy and Austria.

But even if we go no further toward the complete solution of the problem than the occupation of Trieste added to that of the Trentino, we find ourselves face to face with Germany.

Here is the gravest question. It is this point that has recently convulsed public opinion when it was unexpectedly announced that an agreement had been reached between the Ministry and Germany by which the Trentino would be ceded in exchange for the pledge to remain neutral.

To realise the significance of this report it is necessary to refer to the programme for the fulfilment of which Germany desired

(1) - Movement for the *redemption* of the Italian populations subject to Austrian rule.

and provoked the war. This is revealed to us by General Von Bernhardi whose famous book cannot have been published unauthorised.

« A victorious campaign settled matters
« with Austria, who did not willingly cede
« the supremacy in Germany, and left the
« German Imperial Confederation without
« forfeiting her place as a Great Power.
« France was brought to the ground with
« a mighty blow; the vast majority of the
« German peoples united under the Impe-
« rial crown which the King of Prussia
« wore; *the old idea of the German Empire*
« *was revived in a federal shape by the Tri-*
« *ple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and*
« *Italy. The German idea as Bismarck fan-*
« *ooded it, ruled from the North Sea to the*
« *Adriatic and the Mediterranean. Like a*
« phoenix from the ashes, the German
giant rose from the sluggard-bed of the
« old German Confederation. and stretched
« his mighty limbs ». (1)

So then, *Italy is already a part of the political system of German States, like Austria*

(1) vedi — " Germany and the next War ", by General von Bernhardi. (English translation by Allen H. Powles. Popular edition. Edward Arnold. London. 1915 page 66.

and Turkey. In the conception of Pan-Germanism, Austria is the long arm of Germany in the Balkans, reaching to the Aegean; Turkey is the long arm of Germany in Asia Minor, as far as the Persian Gulf; and Italy is the long German arm in the Western Mediterranean.

Between Austria and Italy there is therefore to be no rivalry: Italy must give up her interests in the Adriatic, and direct her activities in the Mediterranean against the English and French colonies of North Africa, under the orders and in the interests of « Greater Germany ».

So much for an understanding of the position between Italy and Germany as regards Trieste at this moment in which the conscience of the people, suddenly illumined by events has shown its firm determination to confront Pan-Germanist pretensions and to vindicate its national independance as a Sovereign State.

In the eyes of Germany we are today a rebellious vassal. More then ever Germany looks toward Trieste as her port in the Adriatic, and upon the Adriatic as her sea because the only route to the Mediterranean by which she can evade English control lies through Trieste and the

Adriatic. Hence it is no longer Austria alone but Germany, that contests with us the dominion of the Adriatic.

Admitting these facts, is it possible to suppose that Germany will consent to the complete solution of our national problem?

I exclude the possibility. But even on the hypothesis that under extreme pressure Germany should give her consent, such an agreement would become for her at the close of the war, *a piece of paper*.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE WAR.

The recent rumour of an Italo-German agreement on a reduced scale may seem plausible to our conservatives who wish neither to separate from Germany nor to draw nearer to the Entente, and who would only be disposed to make war upon Austria!

Out of this contradictory state of mind it is possible that some sort of hybrid compromise should come forth in the nature of that which has been voiced abroad within the past few days.

But the conscience of the people will soon do justice to it.

Before so formidable an enemy as Germany, the dilemma is clear: — either we resolve *now* the military and political problem through agreements and under the guarantee of Europe at the coming Treaty of Peace or we shall silently disappear from the number of the Great Powers, and become a dependency of the German Empire!

Some of the Neo - Conservatives think that in the happy position of a Vassal State of Germany, we shall enjoy a long and well-ordered peace, in which enemies from without shall have disappeared, and enemies from within, — Democracy, — shall be restrained and kept subject and in check.

Instead, that would happen to us which has already befallen Austria and Turkey. Far from enjoying the blissful peace of a country which has consented to place itself under a foreign protectorate, we should be militarised and constrained to increase our land and sea forces which, under the direction of the *Greater* General Staff, would be used not for defending the national independence of our country, but for conquering the world for the benefit of « Greater Germany ».

As the true terms of the problem have

gradually become clearer to people's minds we have witnessed noteworthy changes in the tendencies of political parties.

At first, when it was thought that the vindication of our national claims only called for war against Austria, we observed a general warlike impulse, shared alike by democrats and conservatives, both faithful to the traditions of the Risorgimento. Only the purely clerical element stood apart, still hoping to find in Vienna the keys of some sort of galvanised Temporal Power.

Later, when behind Austria the spiked helmet of the Kaiser came into view, the spirit of peace abruptly invaded the conservatives, war fiends of a day before.

The Italian Conservative may be a hater of Austria but will never cease to be a worshipper of Germany. Divided between fear of German military force and admiration of the Teutonic antiparliamentary and antidemocratic rule, he has found in *armed neutrality* a banner covering the contraband of manifold interests.

For the same reasons, obversely, no sooner did the spectre of Teutonic Imperialism appear in the background of the gigantic picture, with its menace of internal policy in German style, than democracy emphasized

its tendency toward armed intervention at the side of the States of the Entente, who are fighting for the national independence of States, and for the liberty of Peoples.

However the problem is poorly presented in the crude formal dilemma of intervention or neutrality. There cannot be partisans of war for war's sake, nor of neutrality merely for neutrality. The crucial point lies in defining the object to be attained by intervention or by neutrality when peace is signed at the end of the European conflict.

I will state at once on general lines what we who represent radical democracy aim to attain.

1.) The States of the Entente have repeatedly affirmed that the new map of Europe will be modified according to the principle of nationality. Accordingly we intend that Italy shall not issue from this European war without having assured either with the weapons of diplomacy or of the army, her natural boundaries in relation to Austria Hungary and the Adriatic, in conformity with her interests.

2.) To secure the permanency of this conquest, it is essential that Italy should not emerge isolated from the present conflict at the mercy, in a military sense of Germany.

3.) The Central Empires have initiated and carried on the war, violating treaties, the Law of Nations and the principles of humanity, the honour of women, private property, and wantonly sacrificing the lives of children and non-combatants.

Accordingly we do not intend that such barbarous propensities should ever again be allowed to overmaster humanity and submerge European civilisation.

4.) We intend that after this ruthless and insane warfare a lasting peace shall be assured to all European States great and small.

5.) We intend that the new treaty of peace should oblige all the States of Europe to reduce their military expenses.

6.) We intend that by the new treaty of peace all the civilised States of Europe should pledge themselves to the gradual lowering of customs barriers.

7.) We intend that the freedom of the seas be recognised by the new treaty of peace.

8.) We intend that by the new treaty of peace the principle of the Open Door should be adopted in all colonies belonging to European States.

These are our conditions for the future peace.

In this statement of our aspirations will be found the explanation of the strange fact that pacifists, liberals, and antimilitarists the world over, have become interventionists in order to put an end to German militarism.

Our militarists on the contrary, have almost all become pacifists. They hope that the neutrality of Italy may secure victory to the arms of Germany, and that this may reanimate in all Europe the growth of that militarism which consists in continually augmenting military expenses without ever engaging in warfare.

To these may be added the sons and descendants of the Legitimists; — followers of the Bourbons, of the Popes, or of the various graduated Grand Dukes, all of whom are also for peace; that is, for neutrality in favour of Austria.

Beside these, those Conservatives who look to the triumph of the German arms to establish the political hegemony in Europe of the antiparliamentary and antidemocratic regime still in vigour in the Central Empires.

The warriors in time of peace, the Austrianised Clericals and the Conservative snobs who ape the Kaiser's anti-par-

liamentary poses, have now been joined by the Italian Official Socialists, I mean by a fraction of them ; a fraction which dwindles daily, emancipating itself from the better element, moral and intellectual, but which nevertheless controls the electoral machinery and speaks in the name of party.

In spite of political exaggerations I cannot believe that the Official Socialists really desire the success of the Teutonic political regime. They know that the economic position of the labouring man in England, France, and Belgium, is by far superior to that of the labouring man in Germany. They know that in Parliamentary countries the economic condition of the labourer has improved in proportion as he has gained in political influence. They cannot have forgotten that in Italy the economic betterment of the labourer followed the victorious struggle for the right to strike and to organize. In a word they know that political liberty is the condition of the economic development of the people.

But they think, perhaps, that the forces of the Triple Entente suffice to overthrow Prussian militarism in Europe.

I do not know whether they suffice; but I do know that unless new forces intervene

to disturb the balance of the belligerents the war will be greatly prolonged, and I know that the essential point, as I have said, is to formulate the programme for the future Peace according to the Liberal point of view, and win public opinion to its support; — I know that the programme of the Ministry is not ours; whence it follows that the first duty of all sections of Democracy, alike of Socialist and of Liberal Democracy, independently of War, or Peace or Neutrality, is to mobilise all our forces so as to create in the country the political currents which shall enable our programme to issue triumphant from the future Peace Congress.

Shall we or shall we not obtain disarmament? Shall we obtain the lowering of Customs barriers? Shall we obtain for our emigrants perfect juridical equality of treatment in the colonies of European States; for instance, in Tunis?

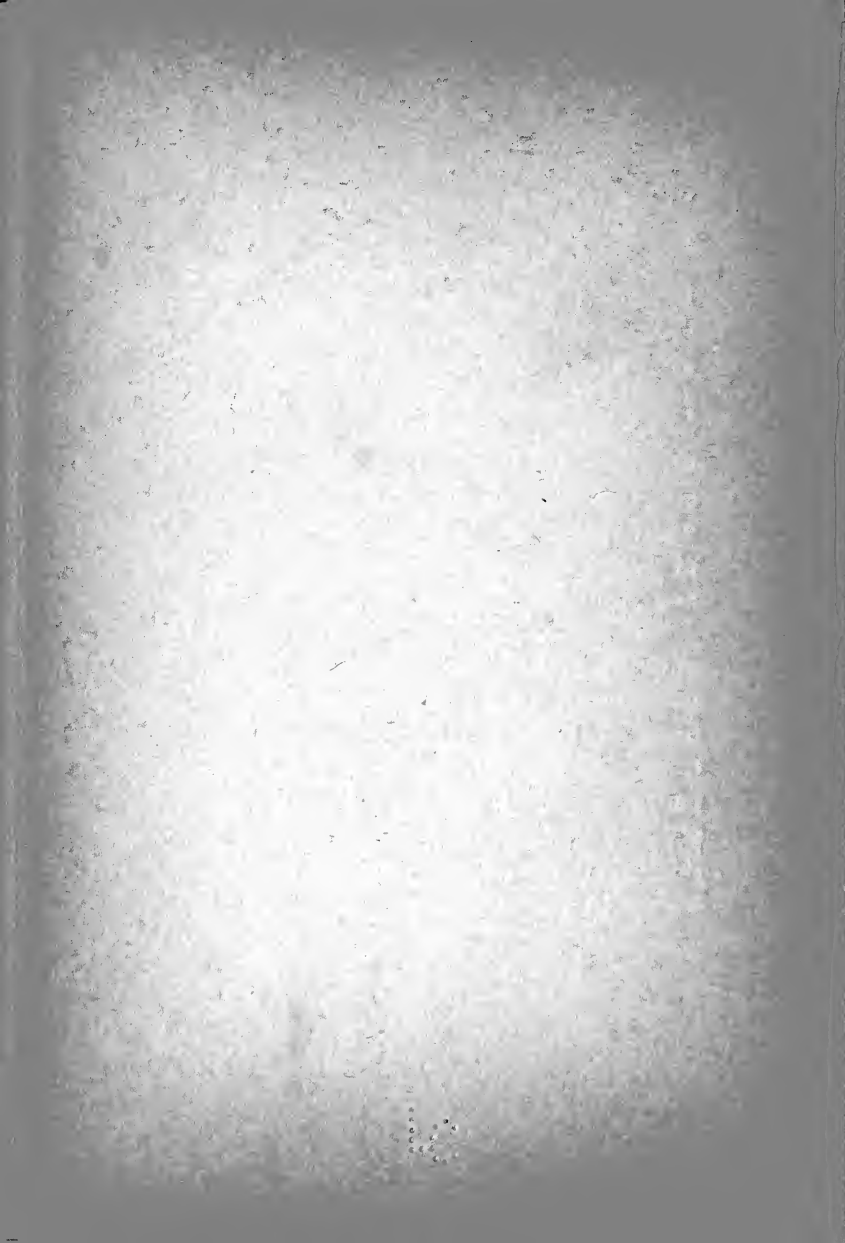
Now a fraction of Socialist Democracy has declared that it is not concerned with these problems which affect the economic future of the working classes.

Probably they think that as the forces of the Allies are sufficient for the overthrow of the Central Empires so we, of the Liberal

Democracy, should suffice for the defence of the real and permanent interests of the proletariat.

Perhaps for themselves they reserve one function only; — to exploit the economic distress of the masses — distress already existing on account of the European war and not dependant upon Italy's eventual intervention, — in order to say afterwards that they were opposed to the war, thus creating for themselves an electoral *alibi* which will enable who knows how many of them to run the race of bloodless battles and profitable electoral victories.

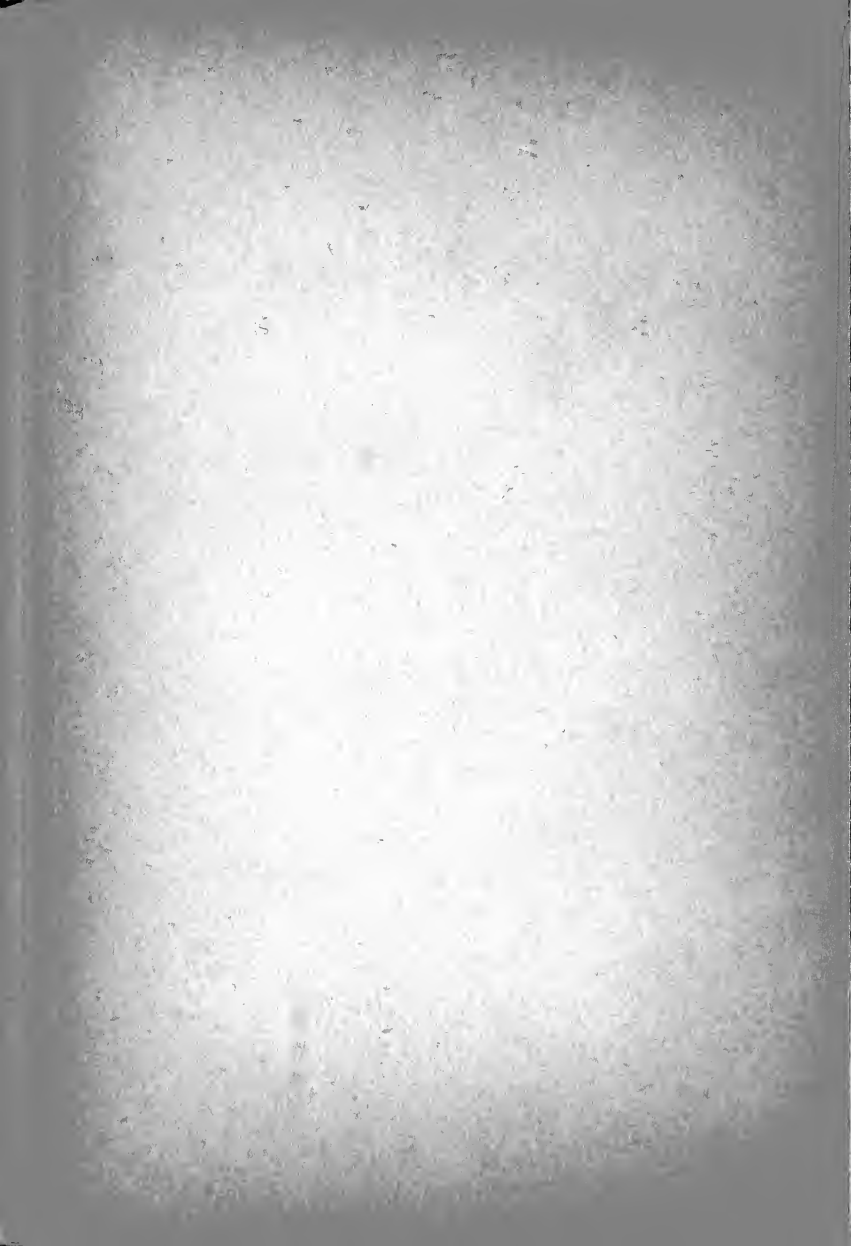
We accept the challenge and will do our duty by the proletariat and the people, in whose interest my friends and I enter the field, fighting as of old against their traditional enemies, especially the monopolies supported by agrarian and industrial protection. This election is a mere skirmish in the struggle in which we shall engage in the country and in Parliament.



APPENDIX

OPEN LETTER TO THE LIBERAL
VOTERS OF THE CONSTITUENCY
OF GALLIPOLI.

(March 1915).



To the Constituents of Gallipoli. ⁽¹⁾

The electoral contest assumes today an importance and significance which far exceed the limits of a single constituency, and the responsibility of the voters becomes more weighty in this tragic and solemn hour in which the destinies of our country are being formed.

To-day, more than ever, a fearless recognition of the duties involved, clear vision of the interests of the country, absolute independance, steadfastness of character and will, are required of him who accepts the political mandate. We are confident that the people of Gallipoli will recognise and appreciate these rare qualities in their former deputy, returning him to Parliament by unanimous vote, after a brief and regrettable interval.

(1) - Opon letter written by friends on behalf of the Roman Radical Association and addressed to the voters at Gallipoli after their nomination of De Viti De Marco as candidate for election to Parliament,

Antonio De Viti De Marco has given his thought to those severe studies most essential to the direction of public affairs. Without restricting himself to the field of the economic sciences of which he is one of the most distinguished exponents, uniting thought to action, he has made of his ideas a living force to stimulate the national conscience to renewed energy.

Rising from the central problem of economic liberty to the conception of liberty in all fields of social life, he courageously upheld and defended his convictions when the storm of reaction was at its height menacing in Parliament and without the progressive movements of the new era.

By word spoken or written, from the University chair and from the Parliamentary tribune, he has been the constant advocate of those doctrines of Free Trade in the name of which he opposed protectionist tariff reform in 1887, revealing its background of corruption and local intrigue. Recent events have proved De Viti De Marco to have been in the right, and have shewn with how much acumen and with what insight born of devotion he has studied the problem of the South, and has understood the true interests of Italy.

In fact while the duties on cereals have not helped to solve the problem of national alimentation they have become an enormous weight for the consumers throughout Italy, and for the agricultural producers of the South.

At the outbreak of the European war De Viti De Marco found his place naturally among those who are eager for the independence of peoples, for the triumph of the principle of nationality, and for the supremacy of law. In incisive addresses before the Roman Radical Association of which he was acclaimed President, he clearly outlined the place of Italy in the conflict, and pointed out the dangers to which she is exposed by a policy of neutrality at any cost.

Radical by sentiment and by conviction, De Viti De Marco belongs to that phalanx of political men whose action cannot be confined within the often narrow limits of a party, but extends to the wider field of efficient reform which demands the practical collaboration of men of different political schools, united in their acceptance of such a fundamental conception of liberty and of the sovereignty of the people as they deem inseparable from a just and

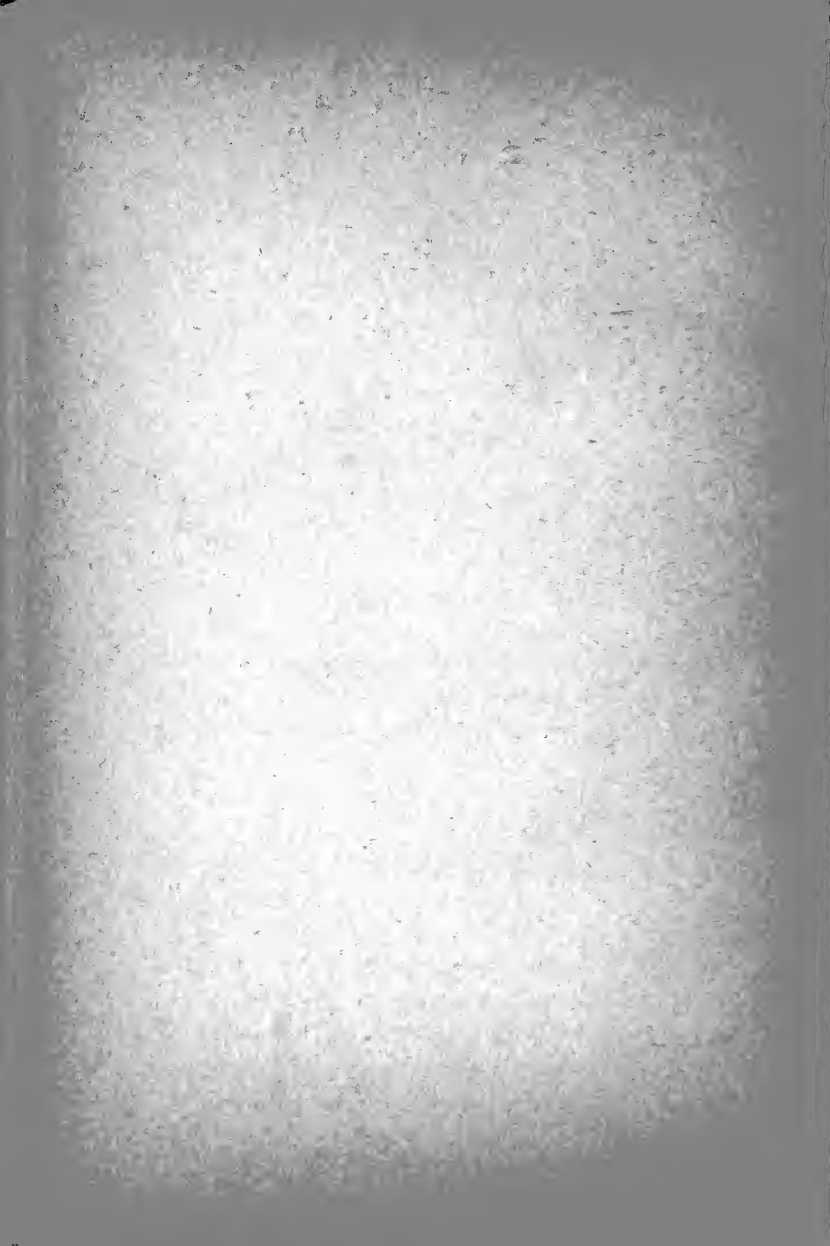
high sense of civic and patriotic obligations.

And men of every liberal party rally today around Antonio De Viti De Marco, and overcoming his modest reluctance send him forth again to do battle in the Legislative Assembly, grateful to you, Constituents of Gallipoli, and happy if the Italian Parliament can again avail itself of the services of this valiant and fearless representative of the South. (1)

Francesco Arcà, deputy (Radical) - Prof. Gino Bandini, of the Central Direction of the Radical Party - Salvatore Barzilai, deputy (Republican) President of the Press Association - Leonida Bissolati, deputy (Socialist) - Prince Scipione Borghese - Giuseppe Bruccoleri, advocate, correspondent of the « Giornale di Sicilia » - Leone Caetani, Prince of Teano - Prof. Gustavo Canti - Giovanni Colonna, Duke of Cesarò, deputy (Radical) - Silvio Drago, advocate - Prof. Luigi Einaudi, of the R. University of

(1) In the original : *questo intemerato figlio del Mezzogiorno.*

Turin - Niccolò Fancello, L. L. D.
- Antonio Fradeletto, deputy - Luigi
Fera, deputy (Radical) - Giuseppe
Girardini, deputy (Radical) - Edoardo
Giretti, deputy (Radical) - Conte
Francesco Guicciardini, deputy (Li-
beral) former Minister for Foreign
Affairs - Matteo Incagliati, correspon-
dent of the « *Giornale d'Italia* » -
Agostino Lanzillo, advocate - Filippo
Naldi, L. L. D. editor of the « *Resto
del Carlino* » - Giuseppe Montesano,
M. D. - Salvatore Mastrogiovanni,
advocate - Giuseppe Prezolini, cor-
respondent of the « *Popolo d'Italia* »
- Nello Quilici, L. L. D. correspon-
dent of the « *Resto del Carlino* » -
Prof. Gaetano Salvemini, of the R.
University of Pisa, editor of the
« *Unità* » - Luigi Saraceni, deputy
(Republ.) - Prof. Francesco Scaduto.
of the R. University of Rome - Prof.
Vittorio Scialoja, of the R. Univer-
sity of Rome, Senator - Carlo Sci-
monelli, advocate - Guglielmo Zagari,
advocate, member of the Direction of
the Roman Radical Association.

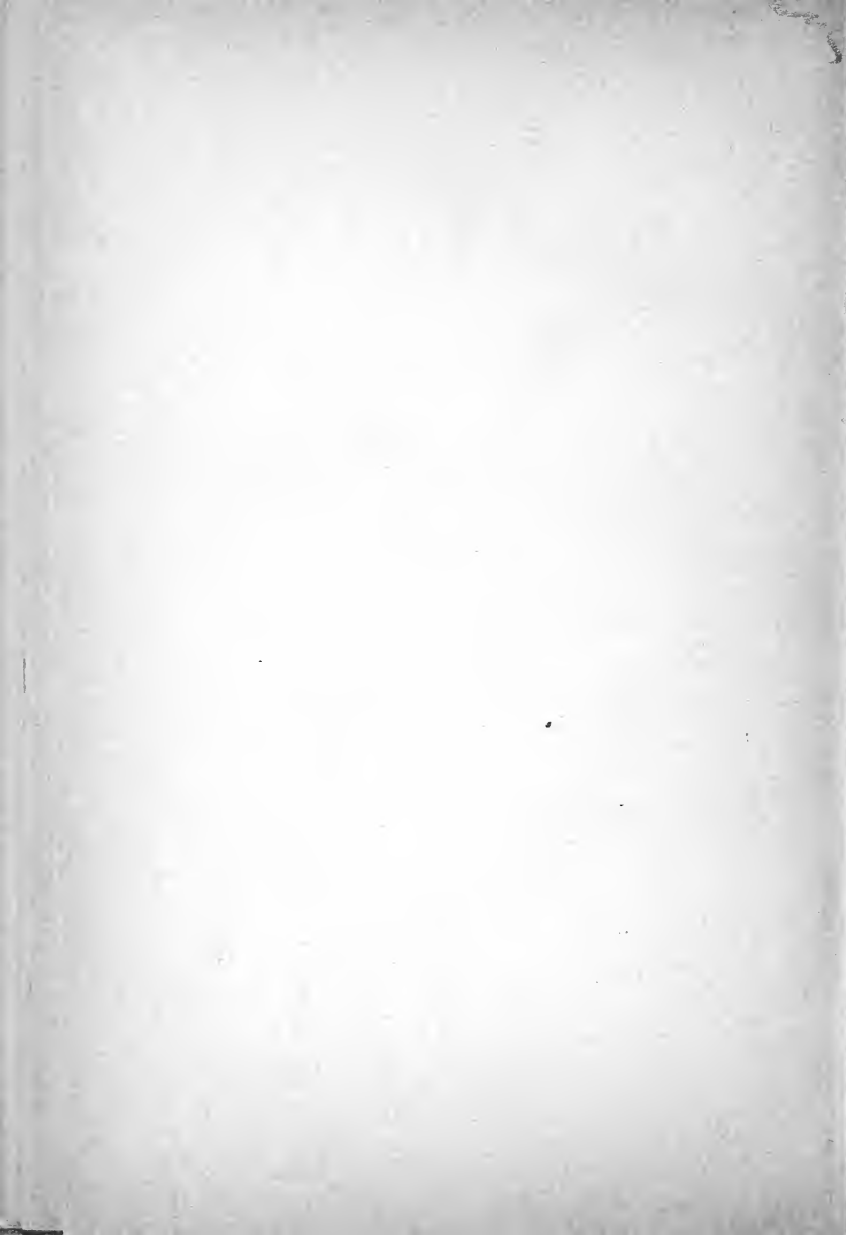


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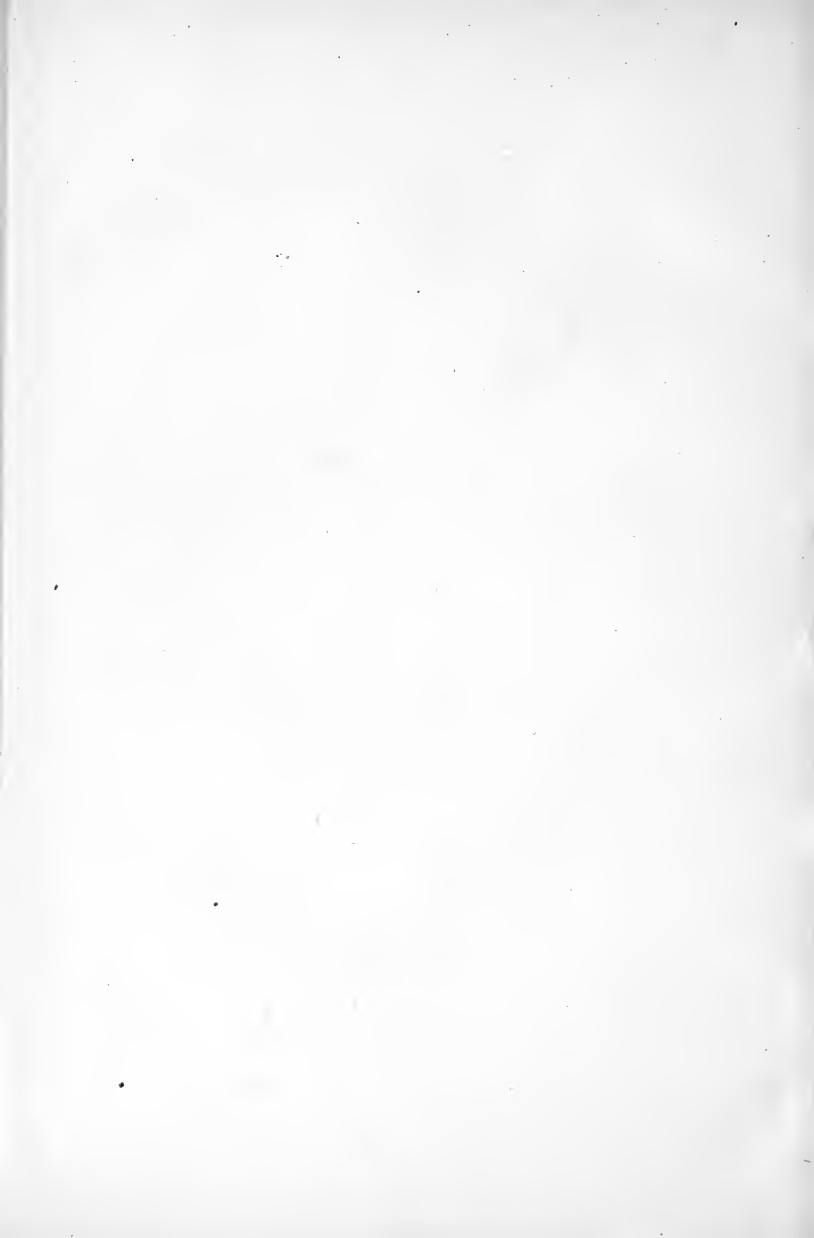
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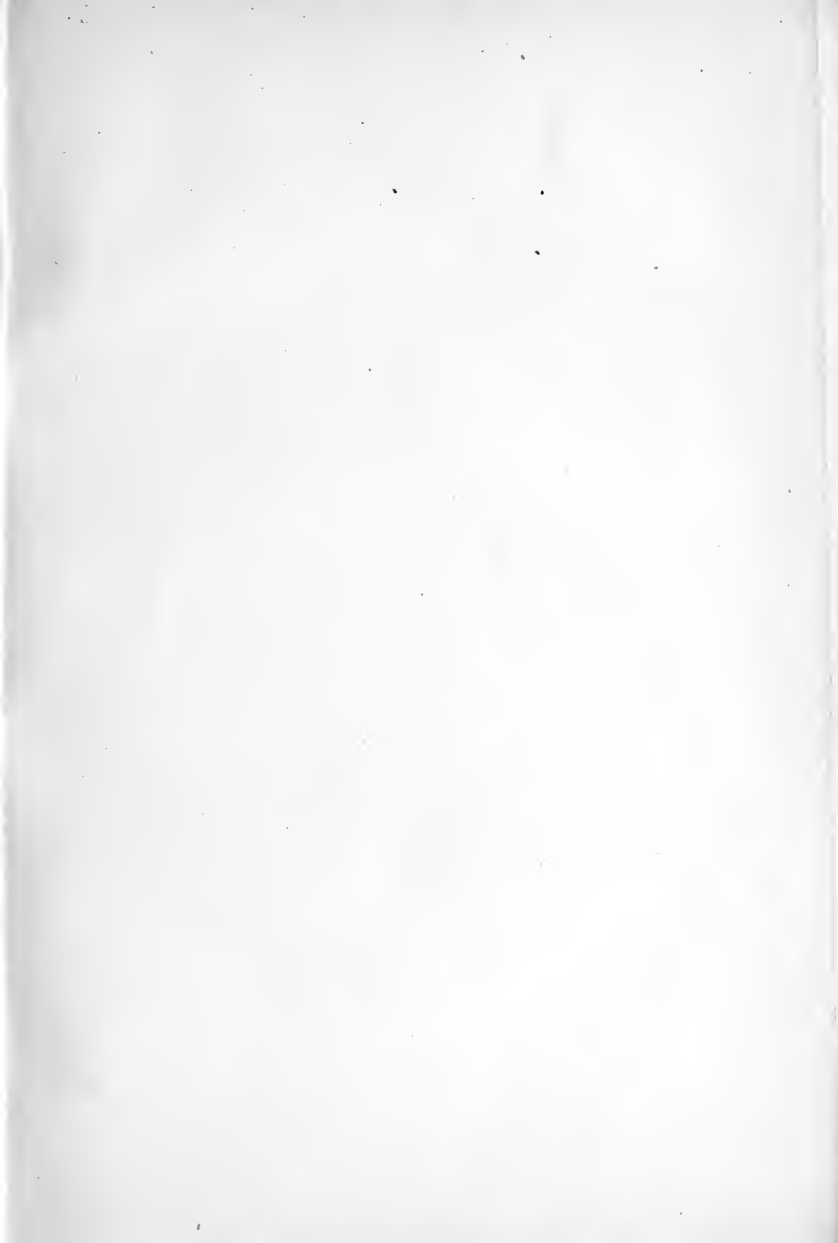
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